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would embrace all the writings [not 'literary' this time] that have emanated from the race speaking the English language." The good and sufficient reasons why American literature is a thing distinct are not given with much clearness, and will be missed by many learners. There are some remarks on realism that will hardly help the average student. Why not say that realism as an art is the ability to paint common experiences so that we almost mistake them for our own? The romancer paints life in the large so that we can imagine ourselves the hero in the case. Realism discovers to us the heroism in our own lives, if there is any, or shows us how there may be much.

To sum up, this is a gratefully good book, and will be helpful to all good teachers.

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Methods of Mind Training. By CATHERINE AIKEN. Harper & Bro.

IN a number of respects this little book is unique; it sets forth in a clear and interesting way a series of exercises that are capable of producing very remarkable results. In fact, some of the achievements astound us, and we are almost incredulous. But the testimony is so strong that we must believe, though we are not able to understand. The author holds that, comparatively speaking, our schools have not been doing efficient service, they have not economized properly the pupils' efforts, and have produced results far too meager for the faithfulness, intelligence, and energy employed. New working principles, new means, and new methods seem desirable. With this point of view most teachers who have thought over the matter, will find themselves in fullest accord.

From this situation the author sought a relief and the result of her inquiry is the proposed "means of saving the pupil a vast amount of mental drudgery and fatigue." She sets forth a series of illustrative exercises woven somewhat into a "system which may be characterized as a means to an end." In this very laudable effort the author disclaims to have produced "a psychological treatise." However, it is obvious that she adheres very closely to a certain psychological view, and her work is a sound and consistent interpretation and application of this view. Her studies have consisted mainly of experiments in

relation to attention and memory, and this book is a history of a practical method arising therefrom, in which psychological principles are applied in the training of attention and memory. Whatever may be one's opinion of the practicability and soundness of this system of exercises, he cannot do otherwise than speak words of warm commendation for such a well-planned and executed series of experiments by a practical teacher.

A circus feat furnished to the author a clue for the solution of her problem, the starting and guiding idea to her experimentation. She was witnessing a surprisingly successful end to a very hazardous performance, when a question as to the secret of the great skill arose. In the performances a single misstep or mistoss might have proved well-nigh fatal. The consciousness of this in the performer intensified his motive to attend absolutely. Herein lay the secret. This marvelous skill was the product of undivided and intense attention. Why cannot results of this perfection be found in the schoolroom? Motive, opportunity, and practice are wanting. The author assumes that innate curiosity, ambition, and desire to excel can play the rôle of motive and proceeded to invent means and to set forth a time for practice. This book describes the means and the results. Appeal to these motives to awaken and invigorate efforts to learn is no new thing, but centering upon them as motives for the basis of a system of exercises to develop attention in which no knowledge getting is an immediate end seems, at first, like something novel. As a matter of fact, however, it is an adroit application of a view of mental activity and a method of school work that many teachers are striving hard to get away from. If I am not mistaken the signs of the time point us strongly to the faith that correct practice is better expressed by "training *through* instruction," rather than by "training *and* instruction." But experimentation of such decided success as that described in this book may convince us differently.

Many teachers will find the opening chapter of no little value. The experiment can be read with profit by all as a demonstration of what intensely concentrated attention in an enthusiastic teacher can do, no less than of what efficiently directed energy in pupils can accomplish. A number of the exercises serve as good illustrations of tests that teachers could use in studying the working ability of their pupils. However, a great danger for theoretical and practical pedagogy arises out of the assumption of the possibility of training a power to attend

to things in general from special formal exercises. Because one acquires special power to attend to things of sight, it does not follow that he can attend with equal skill and efficiency to sensations of sound. The specific energy of nerves must be recognized, as well as the specializing function of habit and the accumulating power of memory.

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NOTES

AINSWORTH & Co., Chicago, have in preparation an edition of *Selections from Plato*, containing the *Apology of Socrates* and the *Phædo*, from the translation by Taylor, with an introduction and notes by Mr. H. T. Nightingale of the Chicago South Division High School. The book is intended for use in second year's work in study of English, or can be used as supplementary to Greek history.

THE following is taken from an interesting paper on "Music as a High School Study" by Mr. W. A. McAndrew, of the Pratt Institute High School, Brooklyn, N. Y.:

If a high school were planned on the basis of doing the most educational good for the individual and for the community, music would receive recognition. If circumstances require a high school to be planned for meeting arbitrary requirements of a committee of college professors, then those who are not going to college should be given a good course in music. Those who are going to college should be given as much music as possible.

The high school nowadays comes into direct antagonism to the musical education that the home is anxious to provide. Many a boy and girl is forced to give up his or her music owing to the press of high school studies. This means practically the loss of the musical culture entirely. To defer the study of music until after the general education is finished is to defer so long as to be too late. A school thrown into antagonism with this most humanizing of the liberal arts is an anomaly in educational progress. Yet we are all more or less in that position. The Michigan Schoolmasters' Club has been considering the claims of music instruction in the high schools, and have resolved that a music course ought to be introduced, the same length as other courses, and that it ought to consist of music one part, and of literary studies two parts, presumably selected from existing courses. They emphasize the desirability of a clearly defined scheme of musical instruction, and recommend that for college preparatory students, whose work is already a five years' course, music should be offered to those who wish it.

A concession to the demands of musical culture was made by Colonel Forbes, Principal of the High School at Princeton, Ill., and is interesting in